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ASSISTANT SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

RANKING MEMBER
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION &
ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
LABOR COMMITTEE

MEMBER
COMMERCE COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Testimony of Senator Rob Sampson
Judiciary Committee
March 14, 2022

S.B. No. 16 AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE CRIME

Co-Chairs Winfield and Stafstrom, Ranking Members Kissel and Fishbein, and distinguished fellow members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to S.B. No. 16.

Over the past few months, I have received hundreds of messages from my neighbors concerned about the unprecedented and continued rise in minor crimes, break-ins, and car thefts that have us all feeling confused about how safe we really are. Unfortunately, over the last ten years there have been numerous bills put into law that have undermined our system of laws and justice - from the early release of violent felons, the "raise the age" law that increases the age criminals are treated as minors, prohibiting police chases and consent searches, the recent anti-police bill, and the irresponsible erasure of criminal records. There have also been numerous other minor changes which have managed to be something like death by a million cuts, modifying the criteria juveniles can be held in custody, etc. These policies have undermined the ability for police to do their job and have made us all much less safe.

Simultaneously each year, there always seems to be yet another set of bills focused on gun control, proposals that are not only unconstitutional but will do nothing to prevent crime or violence of any kind. Assault weapons bans, as well as bans on bump stocks and ghost guns, are examples of policies that foolishly undermine the benefits to society of gun-owning and law-abiding neighbors whose very existence diminishes crime.

Previous gun control bills have done little to fight crime and violence and instead infringe on the freedoms of law-abiding gun owners. Unfortunately, it appears the Governor is proposing more legislation in S.B. 16 that will only further the discrimination against legal gun owners under the guise of public safety. Year after year these laws are passed to make us feel safe while criminals continue to break them, and law-abiding citizens are left feeling the opposite with a reduction in their rights. Imposing additional restrictions on guns, modifying carry laws, and making it harder for citizens to defend themselves will not make our state safer. These bad policies miss the target completely. Any effort on so-called "gun violence" should be focused on illegally obtained firearms in our cities.

These proposals raise many concerns, not just about the 2nd amendment but many other constitutional protections we are entitled to as American citizens and for these reasons I ask that the committee not move forward with S.B. 16. Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to reach out to my office with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Sampson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

State Senator Rob Sampson
16th District